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THE
C H A R G E
OF
K. Horsley
SAMUEL LORD BISHOP OF ROCHESTER,
TO THE
CLERGY OF HIS DIOCESE,
DELIVERED
AT HIS SECOND GENERAL VISITATION,
IN THE YEAR
1800.

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE CLERGY.

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C. E. A. R. E.

OF

THE OLD BIBLE OF ROCHSTER

TO THE

CHURCH OF HIS CHURCH

DELIVERED

AT THE SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

IN THE YEAR



PUBLISHED BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

LONDON

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AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

1874

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

NO crisis, at any period of time since the moment of our Lord's departure from the earth, has more demanded, than the present, the vigilant attention of the Clergy of all ranks and orders, from the Prelate to the Village-Curate, to the duties of the weighty charge, to which we are called. When our Lord withdrew from us his visible presence, and committed the family to our stewardship; he left us not without explicit warning of the conflict, we should have for ages to sustain with the powers of darkness; the dangers, we should have to encounter; and the sufferings, which with remissions at one time, and aggravations at another, but never without a gracious succour duly proportioned to our need, we must expect to undergo. We are particularly premonished, that, previous to the commencement of that happy state of internal purity and external peace, which is promised to the Church on earth in the

latter ages ; a season of trial will fall upon his chosen servants (brief we hope in its duration), but severe, far beyond any thing that hath been yet endured. And they must have given little attention to the prophetic word, who discern not, in the features of the present times, awful signs of its approach.

The whole of Europe, with the exception of France only, and those miserable countries which France has fraternized, is yet nominally Christian. But, for the last thirty years, or more, we have seen in every part of it but little correspondence between the lives of men and their professions, a general indifference about the doctrines of Christianity, a general neglect of its duties, no reverent observance of its rites. The center, from which the mischief hath spread, is France. In that kingdom the mystery of iniquity began to work, somewhat earlier than the middle of the century which is just passed away. Its machinations at first were secret, unperceived, disguised. Its instruments were persons in no conspicuous stations. But by the persevering zeal of an individual, who, by an affectation of a depth of universal learning which he never possessed ; by audacity in the circulation of what he knew to be falsified History ; by a counterfeit zeal for toleration ; but above all, by a certain brilliancy of unprincipled wit, contrived to acquire a celebrity for his name, and a deference to his opinions, far beyond the proportion of what might be justly due either to his talents or his attainments (though neither the one nor the other were inconsiderable) : by the persevering zeal, I say, of this miscreant,

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throughout

throughout a long, though an infirm and sickly, life of bold active impiety, a conspiracy was formed of all the wit, the science, the philosophy, and the politics, not of France only, but of many other countries, for the extirpation of the Christian name. The art, the industry, the disguise, the deep-laid policy, with which the nefarious plot was carried on; the numbers of all ranks and descriptions which were drawn in to take part in it; Men of Letters first; then Magistrates, Nobles, Ministers of State, Sovereign Princes; last of all, the inferior ranks, Merchants, Attorneys, Bankers' Clerks, Tradesmen, Mechanics, Peasants; the eagerness with which, under the direction of their chief, all these contributed their power, their influence, their ingenuity, their industry, their labour, in their respective situations and occupations in life, to the advancement of the one great object of the confederacy, are facts that are indeed astonishing. In this confederacy the men of science and letters certainly played the principal part. And with so much earnestness they played it, that, for many years, nothing was done in France for the improvement of Science, without a view to the disservice of Religion. To this purpose every discovery was bent, every advancement in learning was applied. When they pretended to embrace the Newtonian Physics, they in earnest embraced nothing but certain abstract mathematical propositions. They caught up the terms indeed of gravitation and attraction: but they silyly mistook the meaning. They applied them in senses, in which Newton never used them, and which he had repeatedly and explicitly disowned. They employed
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these terms as names of certain original active powers in matter, by which the motions of the Universe might be carried on, without any superintendence of an Intelligent Mind. They always spoke of such powers as the basis of the Newtonian Philosophy; and by this artful perversion of Newton's language they thought to procure a general credit and reputation for their vain and wicked system of materialism, as if it were founded on the immoveable rock of Newton's Mathematical Demonstrations.

When they embraced the Metaphysics of the sage Locke, as they ever affect to call him, it was to apply them to a purpose to which the sage Locke himself, it must be owned, never perceived that they were applicable. More sagacious perhaps in this than their master, they saw, that upon his principles, once admitted, it would be easy to build a theory of Mind, which would make the immaterial principle as unnecessary in the microcosm of Man, as it was, according to their distorted Newtonianism, in the Universe; reducing all the phenomena of Sensation, Thought, Reason, Intellect, to a mere system of Vibrations.

From the middle of the century to the period of the French Revolution, every great literary undertaking in that kingdom, every considerable publication, upon whatever subject, Natural Philosophy, Natural History, Chemistry, Anatomy, Morals, Law, and Politics, was in some way or other brought to bear, directly or indirectly, upon the great object of the conspiracy,
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the defamation and discredit of the Christian Religion. This was seldom indeed the immediate and avowed object; but it was a sort of underplot, if the expression may be allowed, in every piece, to which what appeared to be the main action was in truth subservient. The stratagem was in this part the more certain of success, and of a wide and permanent effect, because many of the works, which had this tendency, were performances of great merit in their avowed subjects, and for a long time will be standard books, among those who apply themselves to the sciences of which they treat. Thus they convey the poison in the most unsuspecting form, they have scattered it wide over the civilized world, and they will transmit it to remote ages.

Of many instances, which I might produce in proof of this assertion, I shall select only two: the one, a work universally known and read; the other, from the abstruseness of the subject, read only by scholars of a particular class, for by such only it can be read, and known perhaps to no other: yet both works, in a scientific light, of a very superior cast. The one is the famous Encyclopedie. This was undertaken by a knot of Atheists, at the suggestion of the leader of the band, as a work which would prove highly conducive to the success of their plot, by the opportunities it would afford them, in the way in which it was proposed to them to manage it, in which indeed they have managed it, of disseminating their own principles, of bringing darkness, doubt, and uncertainty, upon the first principles of Religion and Morals, and of perplexing the inquisitive mind

mind with the subtlety of dismembered disquisition upon abstruse metaphysical questions; disquisition, not given altogether, but broken into parts, and scattered as it were in fragments through the work; care being taken, that what seems proved in one article shall seem to be confuted under another; while the reader is studiously referred from the one to the other of these contradictory articles; that, if he is a studious enquirer after Truth, he may derive nothing from the most diligent consultation of these omniscient volumes but the torment of Doubt, Mistrust, and universal Scepticism. Floundering in that muddy ocean, for a certain length of time, it will be well with him indeed, if its troubled waters float him not at last, when his strength is spent, to the dreary shores of Atheism. For, if a man, who has once believed in God, can but be brought to waver and doubt in that belief; the end will generally be, that there will be no God for him. To bring mankind in general, silly and unawares, to this state, was the object of the Encyclopedie.

The other instance I would mention, of science pressed into the cause of irreligion, is a work of the Marquis de Condorcet; a profound Mathematician, but a most hardened Atheist, and, as Atheists always are, an enemy to all moral order. This wretch, a few years before the French Revolution, composed a work of deep erudition in the Doctrine of Chances; in which Problems of great curiosity and great difficulty were successfully discussed. But the Book, besides its visible scientific purport, had a latent moral object; and this was, to insinuate an opinion, that

that there is no such thing as Certainty; consequently, no such thing as Truth; that verisimilitude (or probability) is the utmost to which we can attain; and that the only standard of verisimilitude is a majority of suffrages. For this problem was the professed subject of the book, "To estimate the probability of right decision by the majority of votes in popular assemblies."

While these machinations were going on in France, attempts of another kind, towards the same end, were made in other parts of Europe, by the emissaries and correspondents of the French conspirators; and particularly by a set of men, most of them of very inferior rank, but excelling the French Atheists in ancient literature, and, if possible, in wicked policy. I speak of the Illuminés of Bavaria; a Society so formed, as to extend its ramifications from the centre of Germany to the most distant shores of Europe, and, I fear, into the Islands; and yet in all its parts to be under the absolute direction of one head, and to be put in motion, in such manner and by such means, that the great majority in number of this wonderful conspiracy should never know the real object of their association, nor, when their energies were called forth, to what end they were really employed. It was a machine of stupendous size and endless complications, instantaneously set at work at any time in all its parts, by touching a central spring; without any consciousness in itself of its own powers, and without any knowledge of the effects actually produced.

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The success of this vast enterprise of Impiety was beyond any thing that could have been expected, by any but the first projector, from the littleness of its beginnings. "You have a hard talk upon your hands," said a worthy French Magistrate to Voltaire, just returned to his own country from England in the year 1730, "Whatever you may write." — He was then beginning to be known as a scribbler on the side of Infidelity. — "You will never carry your point of demolishing the Christian Religion." — "Nous verrons," replied the crafty Villain. — "We shall see — And the astonished world hath seen! We have seen an open apostacy of one of the most distinguished nations of Christendom; one the most distinguished as a Christian Nation! And in her apostacy many circumstances are open to observation, which give too much ground to fear, that it is but the beginning of that, from which the great Antichrist is to arise. The democracy of Apostate France seems indeed, in many particulars, to be doing the work of Antichrist before he comes, and preparing his way before him. The new government had no sooner renounced the Faith, than they proceeded to a malignant persecution of it; and they used their utmost endeavours to excite similar persecutions, and an equal hatred of the clergy, in other countries. We have seen them anticipating the work of Daniel's wilful King, by remarkably changing times and laws. They gave their calendar a form entirely new, on purpose to obliterate the memory of the festivals of the Church. They openly renounce the first principles of Morality, and they use no discretion in the pleasures of women;" dishonouring, not merely

merely by the gallantries of private life, but even by their laws, the holy institution of marriage. The more effectually to wean men from Christianity, they have introduced something like the old Pagan Idolatry; much of the pomp and lasciviousness of its rites. In their constitution, they affect to imitate the form of the old Roman republic, restoring the powers and the titles of the principal magistrates in the different departments. The countries, against which their arms have been turned, either in the West or in the East, have been principally those which formed the body of the Roman Empire. Insomuch that in this odious French Republic, aping the manners, grasping the dominion, speaking to friends and to enemies the high vaunting language of antient Rome, we seem to behold the dreadful Apocalyptic Beast, which, at the time of the desolation of the Pagan whore exhibited in vision to St. John, had been, but was not, but was to be again; we, seem, I say, to behold, in the French Republic, this dreadful monster beginning to rise, in its antient form, out of the raging sea of Anarchy and Irreligion.

The time will not permit me to proceed in this detail. Indeed, I have entered upon it only from a desire of impressing as strongly upon your minds, as it is impressed upon my own, the magnitude of the danger which threatens all Christendom, and the assiduity, which the dreadful crisis requires of you, in watching over the souls committed to your care. The plerenty, which has seized the French, is of that nature, that it must be

expected to spread, wherever it is not encountered by the most determined energies of Government, and by a great strength of sound religious principle in private life. All will be lost (for a season at least) where the government is patient and passive; or, which is more immediately your concern, my Reverend Brethren, where individuals are lukewarm, and, most of all, where the Ministers of the Gospel are remiss and negligent. Upon this I have much to say; but I must premise some further observations upon what has befallen the Gallican church, which I conceive to be of great importance, as involving matter of very general concern, and such as will give some degree of weight, I hope, to the advice I mean to offer.

First then I observe, that the apostacy of the French nation, and the subversion of the Gallican church, however unexpected at the time in Europe, was not a sudden event. It was not one of those spontaneous revolutions in public opinion, which are to be traced to no definite beginning, to no certain cause. It was not the effect of any real grievance of the people, proceeding, as hath been falsely pretended, from the rapacity and the ambition of their Clergy. It was the catastrophe and accomplishment of a premeditated plot; a plot conceived in mere malice, carried on with steady unrelenting malignity for half a century. A plot, in which the crooked policy of insatuated statesmen, the wheedling arts of intriguing women, the authority of sceptered pedants, allured, by the paltry bribe of literary fame, to league with traitors for the subversion of the thrones on which they

fat; a plot in which all these conspired to abet and aid the chimerical project, as it might at first seem, of a few lettered infidels.

The history of this plot has been given in detail, and the proofs laid before the public, by two writers, who, without any concert or communication, have with great ability and unwearyed industry, and with particular opportunities of information, engaged in the detection of these works of darkness. I speak of the Abbé Barruel and Professor Robison. Their separate narratives, the result, as I have said, of separate enquiry, have all that agreement in the essential parts, which is the infallible character of truth. It is not to be wondered, that the Jacobins should be anxious to sink the credit of these valuable works, the records of the infamy of their party: and for that purpose should have endeavoured to make the most of minute mistakes, not at all affecting the sum of the evidence, which, in enquiries of such length and detail are almost unavoidable. But there are few histories supported, in all material points, by such a mass of authentic document, as the consentient narratives of Barruel and Robison*. And if any one can withhold his belief,

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* In this opinion of the works of Barruel and Robison, I am happy to have the concurrence of a Reverend Prelate, whose extensive erudition and comprehensive knowledge of the present state of Europe, entitle his judgement, upon such points, to the greatest deference. — "The conclusion," he says, " [of the historical investigations of these two writers] remains established

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when he has perused their memoirs with attention; I scruple not to pronounce, that if his judgement is not biased by strange partialities, he is one who knows not how to appreciate the value and amount of historical evidence.

A second remark I have to make upon the French business is, that the apology, which is sometimes attempted for the French Atheists, and may pass too easily upon persons of superficial information and weak discernment, that their enmity against the religion of their country was excited by a just abhorrence of the corruptions of the Church of Rome; that they were no enemies to the Gospel in its purity, and have even rendered service to true religion by their successful opposition, as I have heard it said, to intolerance and superstition; is a most unfounded false assertion. The real object of the settled aversion of the Atheistical conspiracy was nothing that is erroneous and exceptionable in Popery: it was every thing that is good, amiable, and holy in Christianity. They railed, it is true, at Superstition. But Religion and Superstition in their phraseology were synonyms; and Religion was the real object of their abuse. They talked in raptures of universal toleration. But

"by the most incontrovertible proofs; by the records of societies engaged in
 "this diabolical purpose; by the letters of the chief conspirators themselves;
 "by the writings of others, who either openly avowed their design, or inadvertently betrayed it in the heat of contention; and by the actual state of
 "Religion in those countries, in which their emissaries have been most active
 "and successful." See the Bishop of Lincoln's late Charge, p. 9.

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what they meant by the word, as appears by their confidential explanations to one another, was neither more nor less, than the sacrilegious project of seizing upon all property set apart for the maintenance of any established church of any form, or of any religious institution. Had the twelve Apostles been living upon earth, and preaching the Gospel in France, in the times of Voltaire, D'Alembert, and Diderot; the twelve Apostles, as they would have exceeded all other Clergy in the energy of their preaching, and the sanctity of their lives, would have incurred, more than any other Clergy, the reproach and insult of those **Children of Hell.**

The proofs of this heavy accusation are easily to be drawn from the principles avowed in their publications, from the sentiments expressed in their familiar epistles, and from every step in their conduct. What are the opprobrious names, which Voltaire bestows upon Christ himself*, and upon the holy Apostles †? Such, my Brethren, as I cannot repeat, nor could you hear without horror. What are the maxims, which we find in the works of his favourite disciples? "The universal cause," says one, "that God of the Philosophers, the Jews, and the Christians, is nothing more than a chimæra and a phantom."—"The wonders of Nature," says another, "far from proclaiming a God, are but the necessary effects of matter prodigiously diversified."—"There are no means of knowing," says a

* L'infame.

† Douze saquins.

third, "whether there be or be not a God. No means of knowing, "whether there be any difference between good and evil." — "The immortality of the soul," says a fourth, "is a dogma, "of barbarians, gloomy, disheartening, and contrary to all, "legislation." — "Virtue and probity," says a fifth, "in private life, is but the habit of actions personally useful. Personal interest is the only and universal criterion of the merit of "human actions. Modesty in the female sex," says the same grave moralist, "is but an invention of refined voluptuousness, "and morals have nothing to fear from the generous passion of "love. Filial piety is more an affair of education, than of nature; and the laws, which enjoin the perpetual cohabitation "of man and wife, are barbarous and cruel."

Now I ask, upon what principle is this abuse of the Son of God, these daring disputations against the very being of a God, these attempts to obliterate the distinctions of right and wrong, to confound the fair with the useful, and to reconcile men to all manner of immorality; how are such language and such maxims to be reconciled with that reverence for the substance of pure Christianity, which is ascribed to this flagitious junto by their apologists; when they gravely tell us, that the quarrel was with the abuses of religion, not with religion itself: at most but with Popery, not with Christianity, in the form in which it appears in the Protestant churches of England, Sweden, Germany, and Geneva? How is it then that these friends of the reformed churches could find no better name for the faith

faith of the Genevois, but that of "the fooleries of John Calvin." How is it that they never speak of Luther, but in contradiction to the truth of history, and to the evidence of the man's own writings, in which though dead he yet speaketh, as a dull stupid fellow, given up to wine and women? Whence was Voltaire's exultation, in the prospect of the fall of the Church of England, upon which he feasted his imagination, as the inevitable consequence of the truths he calls them, propagated in this island by the pen of his brother-blasphemer, Hume? Was all this from pure love of the reformation? And was the offence taken at the worship of the Blessed Virgin in the Church of Rome the motive, with the democracy of apostate France, to dress up a strumpet in the emblems of the Goddess of Liberty, and, under that title, to pay divine honours to that living idol of their own creation? Was it abhorrence of idolatry, that induced them to revive the Pagan rites in the dedication of altars to Liberty and Reason, and in the ceremonies by which they honour the memory of their dead, while they consign their bodies to eternal sleep? If these things are too absurd to be believed, the inevitable conclusion must be, that pure genuine Christianity is what the impious confederacy would obliterate; which carries us on to this further conclusion, that they will attack it in every shape, and in every place; and for this purpose, indeed, they have their emissaries in every quarter.

Still the operations of the enemy are going on by stratagem. The Kingdom still a prey to the presence of Reformers. But the reformation is not to be effected by what was before attempted.

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The mode of the attack will however be different in different places, according to the varieties of national temper they will have to encounter. And this observation brings me home at last to my own country, and to you, my Reverend Brethren.

In this country, I believe, they know very well, that bold, undisguised Atheism, proceeding directly and openly to its horrid purpose, will never be successful. They must have recourse therefore to cautious stratagem. They must pretend, that their object is not to demolish, but reform. And it was with a view of giving colour to this pretence, that the impudent lie, for such I have proved it to be, has been propagated in this country of their reverence for pure Christianity, and for the Reformation. In their first attempts in this way, we trust, they have been completely foiled. The Laity of this country, the great majority I mean, have no better relish for the Socinian heresy than for plain Atheism. They think much alike of him who openly disowns the Son of God, and of him who denies the Father: inasmuch that the advocates of that blasphemy have preached themselves out of all credit with the people. The Patriarch of the sect is fled, and the orators and oracles of Birmingham and Essex-street are dumb: or, if they speak, speak only to be disregarded.

Still the operations of the enemy are going on. Still going on by stratagem. The stratagem still a pretence of Reformation. But the reformation the very reverse of what was before attempted.

attempted. Instead of divesting Religion of its mysteries, and reducing it to a mere philosophy in speculation, and to a mere morality in practice; the plan is now to affect a great zeal for orthodoxy; to make great pretensions to an extraordinary measure of the Holy Spirit's influence; to alienate the minds of the people from the Established Clergy, by representing them as sordid worldlings; without any concern about the souls of men; indifferent to the religion which they ought to teach, and to which the laity are attached; and destitute of the Spirit of God. In many parts of the kingdom new conventicles have been opened in great number, and congregations formed of one knows not what denomination. The pastor is often, in appearance at least, an illiterate peasant, or mechanic. The congregation is visited occasionally by preachers from a distance. Sunday-schools are opened in connection, with these conventicles. There is much reason to suspect, that the expences of these schools and conventicles are defrayed by associations formed in different places. For the preachers and schoolmasters are observed to engage in expences, for the support and advancement of their institutions, to which, if we may judge from appearance, their own means must be altogether inadequate. The poor are even bribed, by small pecuniary gifts from time to time, to send their children to these schools of they know not what, rather than to those connected with the Established Church, in which they would be bred in the principles of true religion and loyalty. It is very remarkable, that these new congregations of non-descripts have been mostly formed, since the Jacobins have

been laid under the restraint of those two most salutary statutes, commonly known by the names of the Sedition and the Treason Bill. A circumstance which gives much ground for suspicion, that Sedition and Atheism are the real objects of these institutions, rather than religion. Indeed, in some places this is known to be the case. In one topic the teachers of all these congregations agree; abuse of the Established Clergy, as negligent of their flocks, cold in their preaching, and destitute of the Spirit. In this they are joined by persons of a very different cast; whom a candour, of which they on their part set but a poor example, is unwilling to suspect of any ill design; though it is difficult to acquit them of the imputation of an indiscretion in their zeal, which, in its consequences, may be productive of mischief very remote, I believe, from their intentions. It is a dreadful aggravation of the dangers of the present crisis in this country, that persons of real piety should, without knowing it, be lending their aid to the common enemy, and making themselves in effect accomplices in a conspiracy against the Lord, and against his Christ. The Jacobins of this country, I very much fear, are, at this moment, making a tool of Methodism, just as the illuminées of Bavaria made a tool of Freemasonry; while the real Methodist, like the real Freemason, is kept in utter ignorance of the wicked enterprize the counterfeit has in hand.

What measures it may become the wisdom of the Legislature to adopt, to stop the progress of this growing evil, is a point upon

upon which I shall not touch in this assembly. The question, my Brethren, for your consideration, is what assistance the Church of God has a right to expect from you — much she has a right to expect — for much may be done by you — in your proper character (a character of great public utility and of high dignity, when it is well sustained) of Parish Priests. Upon this, I mean to offer my advice. And if I have succeeded in the attempt to impress upon your minds a sense of the present danger, you will take in good part the word of exhortation.

I might deliver all that I wish to say with great brevity, if I were to address every one of you in the words of St. Paul to Timothy: “Meditate upon these things,” [the things of which the Apostle had discoursed, the corruptions of false teachers in the latter ages, the very things of which we have been now discoursing, and the truths of Christianity, as opposed to them.] “Meditate upon these things — Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine — Continue in them, for in doing this, thou shalt save thyself and them that hear thee.*” But it may be not unprofitable to open the particulars of this comprehensive admonition, as the conduct it enjoins will ever be the most effectual opposition, which the holy ministry can make, to the attacks of their enemies, open or disguised.

The first part of the injunction, “Take heed unto thyself,” is fulfilled in the fundamental part by those, who never suffer

* 1 Tim. iv. 15, 16.

themselves to lose sight of the great work, to which the Holy Ghost has called them; and devote the far greater proportion of their leisure hours to useful study, and devout meditation. By the leisure hours of a Clergyman, I understand all that portion of his time, which is not taken up with his public functions. I am not at all aware, that it is the duty of a Clergyman, to assume such an austerity of character, as would entirely exclude him from general society. A different conduct seems to be recommended by the example of our Lord: who, while he went about doing good, refused not to eat with publicans and sinners. I rather think, that the duty of a Clergyman cannot be performed without something of a familiarity with his flock in particular, and with the world in general. Nevertheless, it is always dangerous to Religion, when the manners of the Clergy become too much secularized. This will always lower the order in the eyes of the people, and lessen their general reverence for the offices of Religion. This, however, will not happen, when the private hours of the Clergy, the younger Clergy in particular, are devoted, as they ought to be, to useful studies. The studious Clergyman will not be shy of being seen in public:—He will freely come abroad for recreation; he will make himself agreeable in the company, with which it becomes him to associate; and will not scruple to take a part in their amusements. But he will neither have leisure, nor inclination, to run the eternal round of giddy pleasure; as if diversion were the business of his life, and his professional business only his diversion. On the contrary, a mind habitually intent upon the greatest subjects, and a thirst

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for the highest knowledge, will discover itself in the dignified sobriety even of his relaxations; which will impress his familiar friends and companions with respect, and the profane with awe; while the latter, however they may delight in the company, and pretend to applaud what they call the free and easy manners, will in their hearts despise, and not seldom to his face make a jest of the jovial gay Anacreon, in the formalities of a gown and cassock.

The admonition of "taking heed to yourselves," relates not, however, solely to your private pursuits, or to the manner of your ordinary conversation with the world at large. It extends also to your deportment in your intercourse with your parishioners individually, in your spiritual capacity; which ought to be such, as to manifest a real conscientious concern for their everlasting interests. This will best be done by a chearful, unwearied assiduity in the charitable office of visiting the dying and the sick; and by taking advantage of the opportunities, which those seasons of affliction afford, of administering wholesome advice, not only to the sick themselves, but to their friends and relations. Upon these occasions, you will not think it enough to repeat the prayers at the bed-side, which the Church has provided, but you will make enquiry into the actual state of the sick person's soul; that you may administer such advice or consolation, as his case may demand, and give him all the assistance, your external ministry can give, in making his peace with God. Nothing will so much attach your parishioners to you, in preference to all intruders, as a conscientious attendance upon this duty.

duty. You must not excuse yourselves from the trouble of it, upon a pretence, that Religion being a business to be attended to in health, your utmost services will come too late upon the death-bed, to be of any real benefit. You are not so little acquainted with Human Nature, my Reverend Brethren, as not to know, that even the most religious persons are apt, when Death approaches, to feel alarms and inquietudes, which the word of consolation, delivered by God's appointed messengers, may compose and relieve. But, taking the worst case, the case of one who has led a very sinful life, To delay repentance to the last is certainly most dangerous, and men cannot be too earnestly warned of the danger. But yet I cannot think we are warranted to say, that repentance is never wrought upon a death-bed. I am confident we are warranted to say, that at whatever period repentance is wrought, the soul is saved. It is our duty, therefore, to do all we can. To persuade an early, but to assist and encourage even a late repentance. To set forth to the terrified soul the merit of Christ's blood. To hold up to the eye of faith the crucified Redeemer. To join our prayers to the sinner's tears, and, in the very worst cases, to cry aloud to him that is mighty to save. Remember, Brethren, that "God was in Christ reconciling sinners to himself, and that he hath committed to us the word and ministry of reconciliation."

The care of the youth of your parish is another matter that falls, in part at least, under this injunction of "taking heed to yourselves." Public catechising indeed belongs rather to the

head of doctrine. But there is a duty that you owe to the children of the poorer class, the due discharge of which is much for your own interest, and your own credit: the duty I mean of providing, as far as in you lieth, for their godly education. For this purpose I would advise, that you should, by all means in your power, promote the establishment of Sunday-schools in your respective parishes, and take the trouble to superintend the management of them.

A report has been circulated, by a misrepresentation I suppose in the public prints, that in a debate in the House of Peers, in which I had a considerable share, just at the close of the last session of Parliament, I spoke with decided disapprobation of all these institutions. The report is false. I spoke of them, upon that occasion, as I always have spoken, and always shall speak, as institutions that may be very beneficial, or very pernicious, according as they are well or ill conducted, and according as they are placed in proper or improper hands. I said, that "Schools of Jacobinical Religion, and Jacobinical Politics; that is to say, Schools of Atheism and Disloyalty, abound in this country; schools, in the shape and disguise of Charity-Schools and Sunday-Schools, in which the minds of the children of the very lowest orders are enlightened; that is to say, taught to despise Religion, and the laws, and all subordination. This I know to be the fact. But the proper antidote for the poison of the Jacobinical Schools will be schools, for the children of the same class, under the management

nagement of the Parochial Clergy. Sunday-Schools, therefore, under your own inspection, I would advise you to encourage. But you must keep a vigilant eye over them. Leave nothing to the discretion of a master or a mistress. Suffer no books to be introduced, but such as have had your previous approbation. And, in the choice of expositions of the Church Catechism, which are almost the only books requisite in such schools, besides Psalters, Prayer-Books, Testaments, and Bibles, you would do well to fix on some of those, which you will find upon the lists of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge: upon which you will be sure to find none, that are in any way exceptionable.

Much of your conduct, in the exercise of your public functions, where it is not positively ruled by the Rubric or the Canons, or where a relaxation of discipline leaves more, perhaps, than ought to be so left, to the conscience and discretion of the individual, will come under the rule of "taking heed unto yourselves." It is not only incumbent upon you to perform the public offices with due solemnity, and with fervor of devotion; but the performance should not be in scanty measure, as a toil to which the labourer reluctantly submits. Take care how you give the laity reason to suspect, that you desire to make the most of your livings, and to do as little for it as you can. Nothing hath so much hurt the general interests of Religion, or the Established Church, as the lazy practice, which of late years has gained ground in country parishes, of opening the church

Church for Divine Service on one part only of the Lord's-day. The sectaries take great advantage of this; and, what is much worse, the Devil also takes advantage of it. On that half of the day, on which there is no admision at the Parish Church, good inclinations carry the more pious part of your parishioners to the Conventicle; and the Devil invites those of another cast to the Ale-house.

My Reverend Brethren, these are plain hints. I beseech you to give them due consideration. I have good hope, they may produce an effect, which may prevent the necessity of those exertions of authority, which, if hints prove insufficient, must be used for the remedy of this crying sin and scandal.

The Festivals and Fasts of the Church are, I fear, not without some connivance of the Clergy, gone much into oblivion and neglect. There can be no excuse for the neglect of the Feast of our Lord's Nativity, and the stated Fasts of Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, even in the smallest country parishes. But in towns, and the more populous villages, the Church ought certainly to be opened for worship on the forenoon at least of every day in the Passion week; of the Mondays and Tuesdays in the weeks of Easter and Whitsuntide; on the Epiphany, and on some, if not all, of the other festivals.

Besides the restoration of the Canonical Service of the Church twice every Lord's-day, and once at least on many of the festi-

vals, I very much wish a more frequent celebration, than I find in many places, of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Four celebrations in the year are the very fewest that ought to be allowed in the very smallest parishes. It were to be wished, that it were in all more frequent. I am confident, that the oftener it is administered, the more numerous the communicants will be. But the frequency of the celebration will be of little use, unless your people are well instructed in the nature and use of this most holy and mysterious ordinance. If they are suffered to consider it as nothing more than a rite of simple commemoration of Christ's death, a mere external form of thanksgiving on the part of the receiver, they will never come to it with due reverence. You will instruct them, therefore, in the true nature of a Sacrament. That the Sacraments are not only signs of grace, but means of the grace signified: the matter of the Sacrament being, by Christ's appointment and the operation of the Holy Spirit, the vehicle of Grace to the believer's soul. The Lord's Supper is in this sense a Sacrament, in the very highest import of the word. For you will remember, that the Church of England, although she rejects the doctrine of a literal transubstantiation of the elements, which is taught in the Church of Rome, denies not, but explicitly maintains, that "the Body and Blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper:" though they are taken "after a spiritual manner," and "the mean by which they are received is faith." It is with much satisfaction, that I recommend to your perusal, a work not long since published

upon this sublime subject, by a learned Divine of this Diocese, under the title of "Considerations on the Nature and Efficacy of the Lord's Supper." I have requested the Reverend Author to reduce it to a form and size fit for general dispersion among the laity, which I mean to recommend. — Meanwhile it highly deserves the attention of the profession, to whose particular use it is perhaps better adapted in its present shape, than in one more popular; and it is no inconsiderable monument of the learning and piety of the writer.

Our meditations have insensibly, I think, made a transition from the topic of "Take heed unto thyself," to the topic of "Take heed unto the doctrine." The terms of this admonition are very remarkable. "Take heed unto THE doctrine," not "unto THY doctrine." Although, by a typographical error, we read "thy" in many copies of our English Bible*.

"Take

* The oldest edition, among those which I have inspected, in which this *error* appears, is the magnificent folio of Buck and Daniel, printed at Cambridge, in the year 1638. The text is correctly given, "the" not "thy," in the Black Letter Folio of 1611, in the Roman Letter Quarto of 1612, and in the Black Letter Folio of 1617. All from the excellent press of Robert Barker. The first of these three is the *EDITIO PRINCEPS* of the English Bible now in use, and the second was the first impression in quarto. From the year 1638 to the middle of the past century, editors seem to have fluctuated between the true and corrupt reading, without giving themselves the trouble to consult either the original Greek, or the first editions of King James's English text; and the error prevailed: as appears from the annexed collation, which shews the reading.

"Take heed unto THE (not THY) doctrine." As if the Apostle studiously avoided a form of expression, which might seem to imply, that even St. Timothy had any doctrine to deliver of his own. He is enjoined to take heed to THE DOCTRINE, *i. e.* to ing, the year, the printer's name, size, and place, of many editions in that interval.

THE.	THY.
1648. Daniel. 12mo. Cambridge.	1638. Buck and Daniel. Fol. Camb.
1658. Field. 24mo. London.	1657. Field. 8vo. Cambridge.
	1660. Field. Folio. Cambridge.
	— Hill and Field. 8vo. London.
	1663. Field. 4to. Cambridge.
	1666. Field. 4to. Cambridge.
	1679. The Theatre. 4to. Oxford.
1756. Thomas Baskett. 4to. Oxford.	1701. Folio. London.
	1722. Fol. Edinburgh.
	1762. Bentham 4to. Cambridge.
	1767. Mark Baskett. 12mo. London.

Since the year 1756, the true reading seems to have maintained its ground in the Oxford, and the best of the London Bibles. Whether Thomas Baskett in 1756 was the restorer of the text I cannot tell, not having examined the whole series from 1638 downwards. But after 1756 I find the text correctly given in all the Oxford Bibles; that I have examined (except a small octavo of Wright and Gill in 1776), particularly in the folio of Wright and Gill, in 1770, the folio of the Clarendon Press in 1781, the quarto of Wright and Gill in 1777, a twelves of the Clarendon Press in 1782, an octavo of the Clarendon Press in 1788. I find the text correct also in the London folio of Byre and Strahan in 1772, and in the octavo of the same printers without date of the year.

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the doctrine delivered by the inspired Apostles, and, by the authority of the Church, committed to St. Timothy. And this, my Brethren, must be your rule. You have no authority to preach any new-fangled opinions of your own, or to adopt those of any uninspired self-commissioned teachers. You must stick close to THE DOCTRINE; to the form of sound words originally delivered to the Saints. You are to lay open the wonderful scheme of Man's redemption. You are to lay it open in its intirety. You are to set it forth faithfully and exactly, as it is exhibited in the Holy Scriptures; and, upon the authority of the Scriptures in their plain, natural, unsophisticated meaning, in the Offices, the Thirty-nine Articles, and the Homilies of the Church of England. This doctrine will always find its way to the hearts of those that shall be saved, and bear down all opposition, internal or external, of the carnal man. But if, instead of thus preaching Christ, you are content to preach only Socrates or Seneca; if, instead of the Everlasting Gospel of the Living God, you preach some extract only of your own, accommodated by a bold retrenchment of mysteries, to the blindness and the pride of human reason: depend upon it, animated enthusiasm will be an overmatch for dry frigid Ethics; Superstition will be an overmatch for all such mutilated Gospels; and crafty Atheism, taking advantage of the extravagance of the first, the insipidity of the second, the enormities of the third, and of the rash concessions of half-believers, will make an easy conquest of them all. In delivering the great mysterious truths of the Gospel, and I repeat it, the whole Gospel, with all its mysteries, must

must be preached in all congregations, I would advise you to
 use in general, not an argumentative, but a plain didactic
 style: teach with authority, not as the Scribes: upon the momen-
 tous doctrines of Man's corruption, of Christ's atonement, the
 gratuitous acceptance of Man's imperfect works in regard to
 Christ's merits, of the justification of man, of good works, al-
 ways adhering strictly, as I have before said, to the Scriptures,
 the Thirty-nine Articles, and the Homilies. I would entreat
 you, of all things, to avoid controversial argument in the pul-
 pit upon what are called the Calvinistic points: the dark sub-
 ject of Predestination and Election, I mean, and the subordi-
 nate questions. Differences of opinion, upon these subjects, have
 subsisted among the best Christians from the beginning, and
 will subsist, I am persuaded, to the end. They seem to me to
 arise almost of necessity, from the inability of the human mind
 to reconcile the doctrine of a Providence, irresistibly ruling all
 events, with the responsibility of man as a moral agent. And
 persons equally zealous for God's glory have taken different sides
 of the question, according as their minds have been more for-
 cibly impressed with awful notions of God's right of sove-
 reignty on the one hand, or of his justice on the other. But,
 in certain leading principles, Lutherans, Calvinists, Arminians,
 and we of the Church of England, are all, I trust, agreed.
 We are agreed in the fundamental doctrine of the Trinity; all
 believing in the united operation of the Three Persons, in their
 distinct offices, in the accomplishment of Man's redemption.
 We are all agreed, that the foreknowledge of God is, like him-
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self, from all eternity, and absolute: that his Providence is universal, controuling not only all the motions of matter, but all the thoughts and actions of intelligent beings of all orders. That, nevertheless, Man has that degree of Free Agency, which makes him justly responsible: that his sins certainly are his own, and that without holiness no man shall see God. While we agree in these principles, I cannot see to what purpose we agitate endless disputes upon dark, I had almost said presumptuous, questions, about the order of the Divine decrees (as if there could be any order of time in the internal energies of the Divine Mind), and about the manner of the communion between the Spirit of God and the Soul of the Believer.

When by assiduity in your public and private ministry; by the purity of your lives, and the soundness of your doctrine; you have gained the good will and esteem of your parishioners; they will be ready to give you their attention upon a subject; upon which the people of this country in general much want good teaching. I mean the Nature of the Church, the necessity of Church Communion, and the danger of Schism. Upon these points I know nothing so well calculated for general edification, as a tract, intituled, "An Essay on the Church," by the late Reverend William Jones, some time of Pluckley, in this county, but last of Nayland, in Suffolk. It has lately been re-published, in a small size, and at a cheap rate, by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, of which the author had been many years a most useful member. Of that faithful servant of God I can

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speak,

He speaks, both from personal knowledge, and from his writings. He was a man of quick penetration, of extensive learning, and the soundest piety. And he had, beyond any other man I ever knew, the talent of writing upon the deepest subjects to the plainest understandings. He is gone to his rest, and his works, we trust, follow him. His Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity, and this Essay on the Church, cannot have too wide a circulation.

When you find occasion, which should be often, to preach, or to write, or to talk, upon this duty of living in the communion of the Church, never make it an occasion of bringing up the controversy, which is always better avoided, upon points of Doctrine with the Calvinists; except so far as to shew, that a difference of opinion, upon what are called the Calvinistic points, is no sort of reason for a separation of communions. I confess I cannot understand, upon what principle our brethren of the Calvinistic persuasion should demand, of us, that we should adopt either the resolutions of the Synod of Dort, or what are called the Lambeth Articles, as the necessary exposition of the Articles of our Church. But I as little understand, upon what principle our Arminian brethren should insist, that we should set forth their opinions, as if they were asserted in our Articles, in their true and plain meaning, in condemnation of the Calvinistic. I know not what hinders, but that the highest supralapsarian Calvinist may be as good a Churchman as an Arminian. And if the Church of England,

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in her moderation, opens her arms to both; neither can, with a very good grace, desire that the other should be excluded. This I know, that the points of doctrine, in dispute between the Arminians and the Calvinists have so little to do with the points of discipline, in dispute between Churchmen and Schismatics; that the opinions of St. Austin, which are the basis of Calvinism, have had their strenuous asserters in the Church of Rome itself. Indeed, for a long time, they were the prevailing opinions of the Latin Church. Among us, Archbishop Laud was an Arminian; as since his time many other good servants of God, bright ornaments and luminaries of our Church, have been. But if we would look for warm advocates of Church-authority in general, and for able writers in defence of our own form of Church-Government in particular, such we shall find among those Divines of our Church, who were called, in their day, the Doctrinal Calvinists.

I must however declare, that when I speak of Calvinism and Arminianism as capable of uniting in one Communion, and that one the Communion of the Church of England; I look only to Calvinism, such as the venerable Calvin would himself have owned, not enriched and embellished with the extravagancies of later visionaries; and I look to Arminianism, such as the pious Arminius would have owned, not fouled and tainted with loathsome admixtures of the Arian and Pelagian Heresies.

My Reverend Brethren, my discourse with you has run to so great a length, that I must now somewhat abruptly close it.

You may think it strange, that I have not touched at all upon a duty, which I hold indeed to be of the very first importance; the Residence of the Beneficed Clergy upon their Livings. The truth is, that in all that, I have said, I have supposed your residence. I know not how to talk with a Clergyman about any part of his duty, without assuming residence as a prerequisite; or without assuming at least, that, in particular cases in which non-residence may be allowable, as in some it certainly is, the absent Incumbent is represented, in every part of his character, by an adequate substitute; without abatement of an iota of the full duty of the Resident Parochial Priest. The hypothesis I know fails me, in too many instances. If the high inexpediency of non-residence is not suggested to your own minds, by the detail I have set before you of the particulars of your duty; I know not, by what words of mine I could hope to turn your attention to the subject. All that I shall attempt to say is this; that it will be highly to the credit of the Clergy if the timely reformation of so serious an evil should appear to come from themselves, without any exercise of a compulsive authority, ecclesiastical or secular. The evil is grown to that gigantic size, that a remedy in one way or another can be at no great distance. And, if persuasion prove ineffectual, or take not indeed a very speedy effect, other measures must be taken, and other remedies provided. But of that in another place.

FINIS.

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